

CLAIMS

We claim:

1. A method of operating a financial investment fund having a plurality of securities for charitable purposes, the method comprising:

- 5 creating one or more charitable share classes of said securities;
- designating a contribution amount for distribution to charities or charitable causes for said one or more charitable share classes;
- having the holders of said one or more charitable share classes designate charities to receive said designated contribution amounts;
- 10 accumulating said contribution amounts for a designated period of time; and
- distributing said accumulated contribution amounts to said designated charities.

2. The method of claim 1 wherein said fund is a mutual fund.

3. The method of claim 2 wherein said one or more charitable share classes are issued by a pre-existing open-end fund.

15 4. The method of claim 2 wherein said one or more charitable share classes are issued by a pre-existing closed-end fund.

5. The method of claim 1 wherein said securities are publicly listed and traded.

6. The method of claim 1 wherein said fund has an investment objective of investing based upon socially responsible criteria.

20 7. The method of claim 1 wherein said fund is actively managed by an investment advisor.

8. The method of claim 1 wherein said designated period of time is one month and said distributing step is performed on a monthly basis.

25 9. The method of claim 1 wherein said contribution amounts are withheld as a line item expense of said fund.

10. The method of claim 1 wherein there are a plurality of said holders of said one or more charitable share classes and the account data for said charitable share classes of said fund includes an account for each holder.

11. The method of claim 10 wherein said account information includes reports generated for said holders and said designated charities detailing the contribution amounts, dates of contributions and other information pertaining to said contribution amounts.

12. The method according to claim 1, wherein the distributing step includes distributing said contribution amounts to said designated entities only after said contribution amounts for all of said holders designating said designated entity are above a predetermined minimum amount.

13. The method of claim 1 wherein said contribution amounts are designated as percentage values of the investment of said holder or the expenses of said fund.

14. The method of claim 13 wherein the account data of said fund includes a separate account for each of said charities in which said individual fund designations of said holders are cumulated and said contribution amounts from said holders are calculated cumulatively.

15. The method of claim 1 wherein said fund is a common or collective fund.

16. In a financial investment fund for charitable purposes having one or more charitable share classes that has: (i) a contribution amount designated for distribution to charities or charitable causes, (ii) holders of said one or more charitable share classes designate charities to receive said designated contribution amounts; (iii) said contribution amounts accumulated for a designated period of time; and (iv) said accumulated contribution amounts distributed to said designated charities, a method for starting up said fund comprising:

issuing one or more charitable share classes to be bought from and redeemed with said fund at a net asset value;

selling and redeeming said charitable share classes to said holders;

obtaining designations of charities from said holders;

maintaining account data for the outstanding charitable share classes in one or more computers.

17. The method of claim 16, wherein said obtaining step further comprises requiring selection of said charities from a list of charities designated by said fund.

18. The method of claim 16, wherein said issuing step further comprises issuing one or more charitable share classes that are listed for trading on a securities exchange and that are bought and sold at negotiated market prices and wherein said method further comprises:

having a secondary market holder purchase or sell one or more of said one or more charitable share classes on the secondary market through a broker; and

5 updating said account data for said secondary market holder on said one or more computers.

19. The method of claim 18, wherein said obtaining step further comprises requiring selection of said charities from a list of charities designated by said fund.

10 20. A method for recordkeeping for a fund with charitable purposes having one or more charitable share classes that has: (i) a contribution amount designated for distribution to charities or charitable causes, (ii) holders of said one or more charitable share classes designate charities to receive said designated contribution amounts; (iii) said contribution amounts accumulated for a designated period of time; and (iv) said accumulated contribution amounts distributed to said
15 designated charities, the method comprising:

storing in a computer system information relating to said fund;

20 accepting investor capital from at least one holder;

storing information in the computer system relating to said at least one holder, wherein the stored information includes investor identification information, investment amounts, the terms of investments and the charitable designations of said holder; and

25 storing information in the computer system relating to said fund, wherein said stored information includes the investments and investment history of said fund and the contribution accumulation and distribution records and history for said designated charities.